

# Wildlife Viewing/Photography

## 2009 OUTDOOR RECREATION STUDY BC RESIDENT PARTICIPATION



### Overview

The Outdoor Recreation Study was conducted to better understand BC residents' outdoor activity choices and preferences. Outdoor recreation is defined as outdoor activities that take place in a natural setting, as opposed to in a cultivated or highly managed landscape. The study consisted of two phases. The first phase was a telephone survey; results are weighted to be representative of all BC residents over the age of 18. Phase two, a follow-up survey completed by either mail or email, included BC residents who participated in outdoor recreation and agreed to participate in the follow-up survey. Results in this section compare to all follow-up respondents (total). This is a profile of BC residents who participated in bird watching, whale watching and/or other marine wildlife watching, bear watching, or other nature viewing and/or scenic photography in a twelve-month period (corresponding to approximately October 2008 to September 2009).

### Phase I: Telephone results

#### Incidence of activity

Over nine in ten (91%) British Columbia residents (over the age of 18) participated in at least one outdoor recreation activity during a twelve-month period. Almost two-fifths (38%) of British Columbia residents participated in other nature viewing and/or scenic photography, over a quarter (28%) participated in bird watching, and almost one-fifth participated in whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching (18%) or bear watching (17%).

Participation levels in wildlife viewing and scenic photography varied throughout the province. Almost half (46%) of Kootenay Rockies residents participated in bird watching, compared to a quarter (13%) of Vancouver, Coast and Mountains residents. Almost a third (32%) of Vancouver Island residents participated in whale and/or other marine-based wildlife viewing, compared to a tenth (10%) of Kootenay Rockies residents and Thompson Okanagan residents. Almost two-fifths (37%) of Northern BC residents participated in bear watching, compared to just over a tenth (12%) of Vancouver, Coast and Mountain residents (12%). Almost three-fifths (57%) of Kootenay Rockies residents participated in other nature viewing and/or scenic photography, compared to less than a third (32%) of Vancouver, Coast and Mountain residents.

	All BC residents	Cariboo Chilcotin Coast	Kootenay Rockies	Northern BC	Thompson Okanagan	Vancouver, Coast & Mountains	Vancouver Island
Bird watching	28%	34%	46%	29%	32%	25%	32%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	18%	13%	10%	15%	10%	16%	32%
Bear watching	17%	35%	36%	37%	22%	12%	17%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	38%	52%	57%	47%	45%	32%	41%

## BC residents – Bird watching/marine wildlife watching/bear watching/nature viewing or photography

Almost two-thirds (65%) of BC residents who participated in whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching or bear watching and half (51%) of BC residents who participated in other nature viewing and/or scenic photography also participated in bird watching in the same twelve month period. Seven in ten of BC residents who participated in bird watching (69%), whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching (72%) or bear watching (77%) also participated in other nature viewing and/or scenic photography.

Participation in other wildlife viewing or photography

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography
Bird watching	100%	42%	38%	69%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	65%	100%	40%	72%
Bear watching	65%	43%	100%	77%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	51%	34%	34%	100%

## Characteristics

Over a third of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography were over the age of 55 (40% bird watching; 34% whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 34% bear watching; 34% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography).

Age

	18-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Bird watching	4%	15%	14%	28%	21%	19%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	5%	17%	15%	29%	20%	14%
Bear watching	5%	18%	16%	28%	19%	15%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	6%	19%	15%	27%	18%	16%

BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography have, on average, three people living in their household. Approximately a third have a child under the age of 18 living in their household.

Female BC residents were slightly more likely to participate in wildlife viewing or scenic photography than males (57% female bird watching; 56% female whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 52% female bear watching; 54% female other nature viewing and/or scenic photography).

Household composition

	Average # of people	% 18 yr old children
Bird watching	2.8	31%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	2.8	36%
Bear watching	2.8	32%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	2.8	36%

Gender

	Male	Female
Bird watching	43%	57%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	44%	56%
Bear watching	48%	52%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	46%	54%

Around a quarter of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography have a household income of \$100,000 or more (26% bird watching; 31% whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 25% bear watching; 27% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography). Please note that, on average, 19% of respondents preferred not to answer this question and were not included in the proportions.

Household income

	< \$25,000	\$25,000 - \$49,999	\$50,000 - \$64,999	\$65,000 - \$99,999	\$100,000 - \$149,999	\$150,000+
Bird watching	11%	23%	18%	22%	17%	8%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	9%	22%	14%	25%	21%	10%
Bear watching	10%	22%	17%	27%	16%	9%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	8%	22%	18%	26%	18%	8%

## BC residents – Bird watching/marine wildlife watching/bear watching/nature viewing or photography

Over one-fifth of BC residents who participated in wild life viewing or scenic photography had at least a college or university degree (50% bird watching; 50% whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 42% bear watching; 48% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography). By contrast, one-fifth had an education level of high school or less (22% bird watching; 21% whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 23% bear watching; 22% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography).

Education

	Some high school	High school	Vocational or trade school equivalent	Some college or university	College or university graduate	Some graduate work	Completed graduate degree	Other
Bird watching	4%	18%	8%	19%	33%	2%	15%	1%
Whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching	2%	19%	8%	20%	34%	2%	14%	1%
Bear watching	5%	19%	10%	23%	29%	2%	12%	1%
Other nature viewing and/or scenic photography	3%	19%	9%	20%	33%	2%	13%	1%

## Other activities

The top three other most popular outdoor recreation activities of British Columbia residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography were day hiking trips, beach activities at a lake or river, and swimming in a lake or river.

Over half of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography also participated in oceanside beach activities and road biking or cycling.

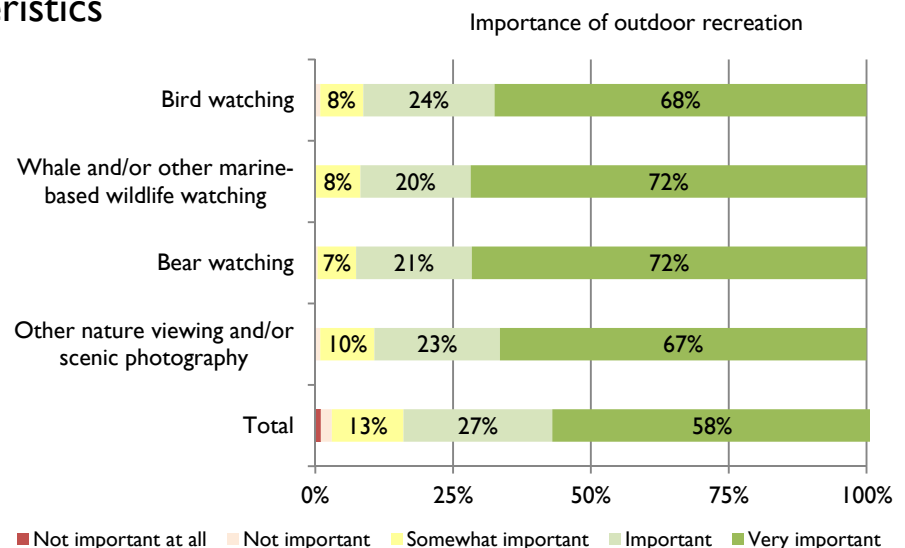
Top other activities

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography
Hiking (day trip)	69%	73%	73%	69%
Beach activities, including picnicking, at a lake or river	63%	60%	71%	64%
Swimming in a lake or river	57%	58%	65%	61%
Oceanside beach activities, including picnicking	55%	71%	50%	53%
Road biking or cycling	52%	54%	50%	52%
Vehicle access camping in a tent	33%	38%	41%	37%
Swimming in the ocean	32%	45%	32%	33%
Freshwater fishing	31%	29%	43%	32%
Vehicle access camping in an RV or motorhome	24%	25%	34%	26%

## Phase 2: Follow-up results

### Outdoor recreation characteristics

The majority of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography considered outdoor recreation activities to be important (by providing an importance rating of “very important” or “important”). A greater proportion of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography indicated outdoor recreation was “very important” (68% bird watching; 72% whale and/or other marine-based wildlife watching; 72% bear watching; 67% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography), in comparison to the other BC outdoor recreation enthusiasts (58%) (total).



## BC residents – Bird watching/marine wildlife watching/bear watching/nature viewing or photography

Seven in ten BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography reported participating in outdoor recreation at least once a week (72% bird watching; 73% whale or other marine-based wildlife watching; 75% bear watching; 70% other nature viewing or scenic

Frequency of outdoor recreation activities

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography	Total
Daily	34%	34%	35%	29%	25%
Once a week	38%	38%	40%	41%	39%
Once a month	12%	11%	12%	13%	15%
Once every several months	6%	5%	4%	5%	6%
Several times a year	10%	11%	9%	11%	12%
Once a year	1%	1%	0%	1%	2%

photography), compared to just under two-thirds (64%) of other BC outdoor recreation enthusiasts.

BC residents were asked, “Overall, who do you most like to do outdoor recreation activities with?” Over half of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography indicated they prefer doing outdoor recreation activities with immediate family members, followed by friends.

Preferred company

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography	Total
Alone (yourself)	10%	9%	7%	9%	8%
Immediate family (spouse or children)	57%	55%	57%	55%	55%
Extended family (parents, brothers and sisters, cousins)	8%	11%	11%	10%	8%
Friends	19%	20%	19%	19%	21%
With a club or special interest group	3%	2%	2%	3%	3%
Other	4%	3%	3%	4%	4%

BC residents were asked to provide a level of importance to various motivations for participating in their favourite activity. The top motivators for favourite outdoor recreation activity for BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography were “to be closer to/experience the natural environment,” “to keep fit and healthy,” “to rest, relax and recuperate,” and “to spend quality time with family and friends.”

Motivations for participating in favourite activity<sup>1</sup>

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography	Total
To be closer to/experience the natural environment	88%	90%	87%	89%	83%
To keep fit and healthy	87%	87%	87%	86%	84%
To rest, relax and recuperate	86%	86%	86%	84%	83%
To spend quality time with family and friends	85%	85%	83%	84%	85%
To get away from crowded situations	76%	81%	79%	79%	74%
To escape daily routine	75%	83%	77%	77%	78%
To learn new things	69%	69%	71%	68%	63%
To experience challenge and excitement	65%	69%	72%	68%	66%
To achieve spiritual fulfilment	52%	58%	51%	51%	45%

<sup>1</sup>% of respondents rating factors “very important” or “important”

## BC residents – Bird watching/marine wildlife watching/bear watching/nature viewing or photography

Around half of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography indicated they occasionally (less than half the time) travel outside their community to participate in outdoor recreation activities (54% bird watching; 51% whale and/or other

Frequency of travel outside of community to participate in outdoor recreation activities

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography	Total
Never - I always do outdoor recreation activities in my community	6%	5%	5%	5%	8%
Occasionally (less than half the time)	54%	51%	46%	47%	48%
Sometimes (about half the time)	28%	30%	35%	33%	28%
Most of the time (more than half the time)	10%	13%	11%	13%	14%
Always	3%	1%	4%	2%	2%
Don't know	0%	1%	0%	0%	1%

marine-based wildlife watching; 46% bear watching; 47% other nature viewing and/or scenic photography).

BC residents were asked about which information sources they were most likely to consider for a new activity or a new destination for an activity. Similar to other BC residents, those who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography indicated they were most likely to take advice from friends/relatives, consider past experience, and use a BC Parks map. Around two-fifths of BC residents who participated in wildlife viewing or scenic photography also indicated they were likely to use visitor centres, visitor guides and brochures, the *Backroads Mapbook*, and the website [www.bcparks.ca](http://www.bcparks.ca), as information sources.

Information sources

	Bird watching	Whale/other marine watching	Bear watching	Other nature viewing/scenic photography	Total
Past experience/been there before	84%	85%	83%	84%	82%
Advice from friends/relatives	84%	86%	83%	83%	84%
BC Parks Map	61%	53%	57%	56%	50%
Visitor Centres	50%	41%	39%	42%	39%
Visitor guides and brochures	48%	42%	37%	43%	39%
Backroads Mapbook	44%	39%	50%	42%	35%
Internet - <a href="http://www.bcparks.ca">www.bcparks.ca</a>	41%	44%	44%	46%	41%
Recreation Sites and Trails BC Brochure	37%	34%	37%	34%	29%
Internet - Tourism websites	31%	28%	29%	33%	30%
Media coverage	26%	25%	23%	25%	23%
Advertising	22%	23%	19%	22%	22%
Internet - <a href="http://www.sitesandtrailsbc.com">www.sitesandtrailsbc.com</a>	14%	13%	16%	16%	15%
Internet - Other internet sites	13%	18%	15%	15%	13%
Internet - <a href="http://www.HelloBC.com">www.HelloBC.com</a>	13%	14%	15%	18%	16%
Global Positioning System (GPS)	13%	17%	18%	16%	14%
Internet - An activity-based website	11%	8%	14%	13%	12%
Travel agents, airlines, auto associations, tour operators, other	11%	12%	7%	10%	9%
Internet - Travellers' commentary sites	10%	12%	11%	13%	11%
1-800-HelloBC	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%
Other	9%	9%	9%	8%	8%

For more information, please contact:

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Outdoor Recreation Study 2009/2010 can be found [here](#).

Want more information?

Please email "subscribe" to [tourismresearch@gov.bc.ca](mailto:tourismresearch@gov.bc.ca) and receive research alerts.

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